

April 10, 1992

Emminence Cardinal Roger Mahoney
114 E. Second Street
Los Angeles, Ca. 90012

Your Eminence Cardinal Mahoney;

We are writing you this letter because we know you are a fair and just man who can help us resolve one of the most tragic circumstances that can befall a family.

First, let us say that we are practicing Catholics and that we hold our love of our religion very dearly. Second, in no way are we looking to embarrass or discredit the church or any of it's teachings. This brings us to the point of this letter. As loyal parishioners and contributors to our church, we feel betrayed by our church.

In September of 1983 we adopted a 5 year old boy, REDACTED that had been placed at Maryvale Children's Home; all details can be made available. We weren't given alot of information about REDACTED but felt "our love" and a good home would overcome anything. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED

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Through REDACTED questioning of REDACTED. He disclosed that he had been molested while at Maryvale (age 5) by "Father Larry."

He immediately instigated a police report and through follow-up were told that the criminal statute of limitations had expired, against "Father Larry", but certainly not the emotional limitations. Through further investigation on our part, we discovered that "Father Larry" was Brother Larry Sandstrom who apparently is still employed by the Catholic Church working with adolescent boys teaching "Ethics and Sexuality".

In December 1991, REDACTED was hospitalized for severe depression and post traumatic syndrome with thoughts of suicide. REDACTED REDACTED REDACTED

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Through REDACTED we made "further discoveries about REDACTED sexual molestation and found it to be more severe and prolonged than we had originally thought. Again, through further investigation, we discovered that apparently when these molestations took place it was discovered, confirmed and reported to the authorities. Further, a police report was taken and some sort of hearing or trial followed. All of which was apparently covered up by the Catholic Church and L.A. County Adoption Agency. Prior to, during and after the adoption this information was never disclosed to us. Obviously, if it had been we would have sought "proper" counseling for REDACTED REDACTED

It was the responsibility of the county of L.A. Adoption Agency and the Church to inform me of the molest and give a full disclosure. Again, this did not happen. He want to deal with the county separately and for that reason we have hired legal counsel. We are hopeful that the Church can properly address its role in this matter, informally.

The pain and suffering our family has been forced to endure goes far beyond anyone's imagination, expectations or description. As parents watching our children's pain - the countless nightmares, fears of the dark or unknown, fear of separation loss of personal safety in their own home or car. The disappointment of betrayal by someone they loved and admired as a "big brother." Knowing in their hearts it doesn't "feel right," but wanting to trust and please their loved one as children need to do. The humiliation and shame. Witnessing the loss of laughter in our home replaced by fear, anxiety, anger, mistrust and tears. Wondering and praying all the while if they will ever recover. Trust and laugh again as normal children should.

REDACTED

And - the physical and mental pain he was forced to endure (sodomy, physical restraint, humiliation, etc) countless times by a "man of God" in the first place he's ever been able to call home after an early childhood of numerous abandonments - never knowing who was going to reject him again. And when he did, what he thought was "right" by telling on Harry...

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asking for help, not only was he not believed,
but he suffered more losses. His trusted therapist
(who was fired for reporting the incident to the
police), gone without explanation from his life and
his first and only friend and companion ^{REDACTED}
(a victim of Larry's, also) was punished and
removed from his life, also without explanation
(who today and for many years past and future
resides at Camarillo State Mental Hospital). It's
no wonder he didn't talk about it for 8 years!

What must ^{REDACTED} feel and think about God
and His teachers? How can we teach him to
trust and have faith in his God in heaven if
God's people on earth aren't teaching him and
living it themselves?

He is struggling, daily. He serves religiously
during mass as our parish and is highly respected
by Monsignor, other priests and our youth minister.
But, he has confided in us how fearful and
anxious he becomes everytime he's alone in the
room before and after mass and CCD class with
"a man of the cloth." He questions his own sexuality-
fearful that he is or will become a homosexual
because of those experiences. He's struggling with
his belief in God and trust. ^{REDACTED} has suffered
so severely from these experiences it is uncertain
at this time if he can ever recover.

What about Larry Sandstrom? Can he be
allowed to continue to represent our Church and
our God to countless adolescents at a time in their
lives when they are formulating their ideals, ethics
and morals that will effect the rest of their lives.

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and their future families? How many other families or individuals has Larry been allowed to inflict his pain on that haven't come forward? What kind of pain has he endured to want to hurt others in this manner, and how are we as God's people helping him if we allow him to continue on his path of destruction? We have a moral, legal and spiritual obligation to Larry Sandstrom that cannot be ignored.

No human being should be asked to endure this kind of pain. We have prayed for God's wisdom and guidance on countless occasions and we believe this is what he wants us to do. We come to you in our pain with open hearts, honesty and love seeking your help as a man of God for the preservation of our family, our church and others like us. We ask not for revenge or judgement - that is God's call - but for monetary aid so that we may cope with the tremendous burden facing our family.

We ask that you pray to God for guidance and wisdom in doing what is just and righteous prior to contacting us.

You will be in our prayers as you ask for God's guidance, as you carry an awesome responsibility for so many lives. We trust in your ability to listen to God and we appreciate and share your commitment to life and quality.

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all of God's children and we look forward to
hearing from you, soon. Preferably within
The next 10 days.

Sincerely in Christ,
REDACTED

P.S.

Our address and phone number:

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